

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-23 are pending in this application, with claims 1 and 13 being the only independent claims. Claim 1 is amended. Claims 20-23 are added. Reconsideration of the above-identified application, as herein amended and in view of the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

Applicant greatly appreciates the courtesies extended by the Examiner during the telephonic interview of August 24, 2007. The subject matter of the interview is incorporated in the discussion below.

Claims 1-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,754,656 (Nishioka) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,209,095 (Anderson).

The present invention relates to a method and system for signing an electronic form using a mobile station. As discussed in applicant's disclosure, a local payment machine (LPM) 2 generates the material to be signed, computes a hash code H1 from the material, and then transfers the material and the hash code to a mobile station (see page 8, line 34 - page 9, lines 3; page 9, lines 28-31; and Fig. 1 of the present application). The mobile station communicates with the local payment machine using wireless technology such as Bluetooth or an infrared interface (see page 9, lines 1-10). The material and hash code are signed by the user using the mobile station (page 9, line 36 - page 10, line 1). A display on the mobile station allows the user to check whether the information in the material is correct before the user signs the material and hash code (page 11, lines 14-18). After signing by the user, the material with the digitally signed hash code may be authenticated by the payment machine (page 10, lines 1-10).

Independent claim 1 is now amended to specifically recite "verifying, in the payment machine, the authenticity of the signed and transferred material by comparing the signed

hash code with the first hash code computed from the material before signature”. Independent claim 13 similarly recites “the payment machine comprises means for verifying the authenticity of the signed and transferred material by comparing the signed hash code with the first hash code computed from the material before signature”.

A notable aspect of the present invention is that the local payment machine (1) generates a document that is sent to the mobile station and computes a hash with the document, and (2) receives the signed document from the user and verifies the authenticity of the document by checking the signed hash. Nishioka fails to disclose this feature.

Nishioka discloses an electronic shopping method. According to Nishioka, a user site apparatus 10, i.e., a terminal, is operated by a user who has a smart card 20 (see Fig. 1, and col. 9, lines 3-6 of Nishioka). A retail store site apparatus 30 is installed in a retail store and is connected to the user site apparatus 10 by a communication line 50 for introducing various products to the user (col. 9, lines 6-9). Nishioka teaches that the user site apparatus 10 corresponds to a terminal possessed by a user in which the smart card 20 is inserted (col. 9, lines 16-20).

In the Nishioka shopping method, a user inserts the smart card into the user site apparatus 10, i.e., the user possessed terminal, and utilizes the user site apparatus 10 to select items for purchase from the retail store site apparatus 30 which is connected to the user site apparatus 10 by the communication line 50 (col. 10, lines 38-43). The user then activates a document producing unit 102 on the user site apparatus 10 which produces a written order for items that the user wishes to purchase from the retail store site apparatus 30 (col. 10, lines 44-52). This written order is sent to the smart card 20 (col. 10, lines 66-67). The smart card enciphers part of the written order P2 and sends it to the retail store site apparatus 30 (col. 11, lines 1-18). Retail store site apparatus 30 then

deciphers the order (col. 11, lines 55-60). In a further embodiment, the user site apparatus generates a hash and the retail store site apparatus 30 authenticates the signed hash (see col. 14, lines 18-23).

Thus, in Nishioka the user site apparatus 10 generates the written order and hash and the retail store site apparatus 30 authenticates the signed hash. Since Nishioka discloses that the hash code is created and authenticated in two different devices, Nishioka fails to teach or suggest “computing, in a payment machine, a first hash code for the material to be signed” and “verifying, in the payment machine, the authenticity of the signed and transferred material by comparing the signed hash code with the first hash code computed from the material before signature”, as expressly recited in independent claim 1.

Anderson fails to teach or suggest what Nishioka lacks. Anderson discloses a signing method for computer-based document signing. According to Anderson, separate hashes are calculated for two sections of a document (see Fig. 35; and col. 20, lines 16-31 of Anderson). The hashed sections are placed consecutively in a message and a hash is calculated for the combined sections, which is signed. This ensures that no third party has tampered with any of the parts of the document, i.e., the final signature ensures the authenticity of the entire document. Furthermore, Anderson discloses that the payer 12 creates the financial instrument and signs it (see, e.g., col. 23, lines 41-45). And a payee receives and validates the signature (see col. 23, lines 57-60). Since the payer both creates and signs the document and a separate entity verifies the signature, Anderson fails to teach or suggest “computing, in a payment machine, a first hash code for the material to be signed” and “verifying, in the payment machine, the authenticity of the signed and transferred material by comparing the signed hash code with the first hash code computed from the material before signature”.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, independent claim 1 is deemed to be allowable over Nishioka in view of Anderson.

Independent claim 13 is directed to a system including a payment machine and a mobile station and includes similar limitations to the above-cited limitations of independent claim 1. In the Advisory Action, the Examiner states that independent claim 13 is not amended and therefore remains rejected over Nishioka in view of Anderson. Applicant notes that claim 13 requires that the payment machine generates the material to be signed and verifies authenticity of the signed and transferred material. Accordingly, independent claim 13 should also be considered allowable over Nishioka in view of Anderson for the same reasons as is independent claim 1.

Dependent claims 2-12 and 14-23 are allowable for the same reasons described above with respect to independent claims 1 and 13, as well as for the additional recitations contained therein.

Dependent claim 10 recites “the material or part of the material is presented on the *display in the mobile station* before the material is signed”. The Examiner previously referred to col. 13, lines 3-8 of Nishioka in the rejection of claim 10. However, this section of Nishioka describes the user site apparatus 10 which the Examiner considers to be the claimed payment machine. The smart card 20, which the Examiner considers to be the claimed mobile station, does not have a display. Accordingly, dependent claim 10 should be allowable for at least this additional reason.

New claims 20-23 are added to recite that the communication between the mobile station and the payment machine is by wireless transmission and, specifically, by Bluetooth or infrared technology. Support for these limitations is found at page 9, lines 5-10 of the original application.

The Office Action states that the user site apparatus 10 of Nishioka is considered to read on the claimed payment machine and the smart card 20 of Nishioka is the mobile station. However, these components do not communicate by wireless transmission. Accordingly, claims 20-23 are allowable for at least these additional reasons.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the application is now deemed to be in condition for allowance, and early notice to that effect is solicited.

Should the Examiner have any comments, questions, suggestions, or objections, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned in order to facilitate a resolution of any outstanding issues.

It is believed that no additional fees or charges are required at this time in connection with the present application. However, if any additional fees or charges are required at this time, they may be charged to our Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 03-2412.

Respectfully submitted,
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